

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the due consideration given the application.

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-20 and 42-43 are pending in the application. By this amendment, claims 44-46 have been canceled and their subject matter has been incorporated into claim 1. Claims 3, 10, 12, 13 and 17 have been amended to improve the language in what is believed to be a non-narrowing fashion. Claims 42 and 43 have been amended to better correspond to the amendments to claim 1.

No new matter is believed to be added to the application by this amendment.

Entry of this amendment under 37 CFR §1.116 is respectfully requested because it cancels claims, addresses matters of form and places the application in condition for allowance.

Rejection Under 35 USC §112, First Paragraph

Claims 1-20 and 42-46 have been rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Official Action asserts that the limitation "gradually" represents new matter in light of the 60°-90° angular range set forth in the claims. However, the claims have been amended to remove the recitation of "gradually."

The Official Action asserts that the relationships set forth in claims 44-46 are a set of interrelated limitations that represent new matter if claimed separately. Applicants do not accede to this position. However, claims 44-46 have been canceled and their subject matter has been incorporated into claim 1, thus fully paralleling the description set forth at page 12 of the specification.

The claims are thus in full compliance with the written description requirement.

This rejection is believed to be overcome, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 USC §112, Second Paragraph

Claims 3, 10, 12, 13, 17 and 44-46 have been rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Official Action asserts that the limitation "upside" in claim 3 is indefinite. However, claim 3 has been amended to better define the relationship of the coating surface with the web.

The Official Action asserts that the limitation "plate-shaped member" in claims 10, 12 and 13 is unclear. However, these claims have been amended to clearly set forth a "plate member."

The Official Action asserts that the position of the heating device set forth in claim 17 is unclear. However, the

language of claim 17 has been amended to better recite the position of the heating device. It is also noted that Figure 1 of the application shows an extrusion dies at one side of the web 15 to form a coating, and the heater 25 is at the other, non-coated side of the web 15. Thus the relationship of heater to web is clear in light of Figure 1.

The Official Action asserts issues in claim 1 regarding the term "gradually" and the limitations in claims 44-46. However, the claims have been amended to address any ambiguity, as has been discussed above.

The claims are thus clear, definite and have full antecedent basis.

This rejection is believed to be overcome, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully respected.

Art Rejections

Claims 1-9, 11, 14-20, 42 and 43 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being anticipated by STROBUSH et al. (U.S. Patent 5,881,476) in view of AOKI (U.S. Publication 2002/0031608 A1). Claims 10, 12 and 13 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over STROBUSH et al. in view of AOKI, and further in view of REZNIK (U.S. Patent 4,694,586). Claims 1-4, 19, 20, 42, and 43 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by ONUKI et al. (JP 09-2054355). Claims 1-4, 19, 20, 42-44 and 46 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by HASHIMOTO et al. (JP 2003-

133160). Claims 1-4, 19, 20 and 42-45 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by MORGAN et al. (U.S. Patent 5,403,649).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 44-46 have been canceled and their subject matter has been incorporated into claim 1. All of the applied art rejections were clear of at least one of claims 44-46, and the incorporation of these claims into claim 1 thus makes claim 1 instantly patentable over the applied art. Claims depending upon claim 1 are believed to be patentable for at least the above reasons.

These rejections are believed to be overcome, and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

The Examiner is thanked for considering the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 26, 2004, and for making an initialed PTO-1449 Form of record in the application.

Prior art of record but not utilized is believed to be non-pertinent to the instant claims.

The rejections are believed to be overcome, obviated or rendered moot, in that no issues remain. The Examiner is accordingly respectfully requested to place the application in condition for allowance and to issue a Notice of Allowability.

Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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